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The Chaplain's Cleverness

By C. B. Lewis

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One day at the Third National bank, in the city of Cornopolis, a stranger walked through the president's room and past the bookkeeper's and took from the pile of money stacked at the paying teller's right hand four packages of \$10,000 each. He was coolly walking out again when stopped by the president and a gun.

The man was known to the police as "Slick Charlie," and to tell of all his adventures would fill a book. It was for his attempted theft of the \$40,000 that he was sent to the Woonson penitentiary for five years. The officer who delivered him behind the doors of that institution said to the warden:

"Here is a man you want to keep an eye on. Don't lose sight of him day or night. He is bold and nifty on the one hand and slick and sly on the other. Don't trust him for an hour, or he'll beat the game."

The warden was a new man at the prison; but, having been sheriff of a county, he thought he knew about all sorts of criminals and replied that No. 870, as "Slick Charlie" was recorded, would have to get up early in the morning to beat him.

If a prison chaplain were to be questioned about religion in a prison he would answer that scores of prisoners lived up to it and were earnest and devout. If an experienced warden were to be questioned, he would answer that just when a prisoner began to "get good" he should be watched the closest. The chaplain at Woonson was a good man and one who had faith in himself. He thought his advice and appeals to burglars and murderers produced the desired effect. Among the prisoners he was known as an easy mark.

The new warden was wary of antagonizing the captain and a man not well posted on the tricks of criminals, so No. 870 found things easy for him when he entered prison. When he had had full opportunity to size up the chaplain he began to "get good." He was as earnest about this as he had been in appropriating other people's goods. He became contrite and humble, and he wanted to be turned from paths of wickedness. Of course the chaplain did his best. When the police officials heard that "Slick Charlie" had been converted they notified the warden in writing that he would be



HE WAS COOLLY WALKING OUT AGAIN WHEN STOPPED BY THE PRESIDENT.

out of the "pen" within three months, and the chaplain sent an official complaint to the governor that the police were trying to discredit his labors.

The chaplain was a man forty-five years old, while No. 870 was only thirty. The chaplain was four inches the taller, had stoop shoulders and shambled as he walked. He also had a peculiar intonation. The slick convict gave up his original idea of digging for liberty to study the chaplain. At the end of five months he was one of the teachers in the evening school. At the end of seven he asked and got liberty to hold a Bible class on Sundays. He wrote and the chaplain delivered a sermon on "Christianity in Prison," which was commented on by hundreds of papers. Up to this time he had been working in the tailor shop. He was now given charge of the prison library, and his plans were as good as carried out.

It was the habit of the chaplain to visit the prison every afternoon from 3 to 5. A part of the time was spent with prisoners in their cells—men who were undergoing light punishment—and a part in the library, and he always left pretty promptly at 5. In going out he passed three guards at locked gates and went through the warden's office and out of the main door. No. 870 had held the position of librarian for three months, and it was mid-winter. One afternoon the chaplain had been visiting in the prison and returned to the library at a quarter of 5. As he entered the room he received a blow that knocked him senseless, and when he recovered his wits half an hour had passed and he was tied hand and foot and gagged. It was 6 o'clock before he was released.

In the course of that hour No. 870 had done some wonderful things. Af-

ter knocking down the chaplain he had stripped off the latter's outer garments and clothed himself in them; then he had secured his man with ropes and locked the door behind him as he emerged. Shambling down the corridor to the first guard, he had said: "James, I came away today with only a dime in my pocket. Can you lend me a dollar until tomorrow?" "With the greatest pleasure, chaplain." And the money had been handed over.

The same game had been played on the two others, and then the "chaplain" had entered the warden's office. He could have passed right through, as the official was busy, but instead of that he took a chair and waited for ten minutes. When the warden was at liberty he was asked for a loan of \$10, and the "chaplain" reported to him on the welfare of three or four different prisoners before saying good night. Fifteen minutes after leaving the prison the disguised prisoner entered the largest store in the town and borrowed \$20 of the merchant and then disappeared.

When the library door was broken open at 6 o'clock and the real chaplain found there was a great commotion. Three gatekeepers were ready to swear that the clergyman had passed out, taking a dollar from each as he did so. The warden had seen and talked and loaned money to the same man. Two guards had also seen him. Here were six prison officials who could swear to a thing, and yet that thing was not a fact. No. 870 had simply imitated the chaplain down to a line—his voice, gait, speech and general look.

At 11 o'clock the next forenoon the president of the Third National bank of Cornopolis was called out of his room for a moment. During his absence a man dressed like one of the clerks in the bank entered the room and bore away a package of bonds of the face value of \$18,000. "Slick Charlie" wanted to be revenged upon the bank, and he wanted money with which to leave the country, and he tarried in the town to get both. The president of the bank is sure of this, because a note left on his desk told him so.

How Thimbles Are Made.

In the making of a thimble there are several operations, the blank passing into the cup and then the rolling on of the band. Then the thimbles, which have assumed a form warranting the name, are carried to the factory proper, and after burnishing the more interesting process of knurling is performed. This knurling is the forming of the little indentations which receive the end of the needle and assist in pushing the point through the fabric. Placing the cup in a lathe, the operator with a suitable tool knurls the end of the thimble. During this operation a peculiar and by no means unpleasant musical sound is emitted with varying tones. The point of the thimble being reached, a flat knurler finishes the side, and with a sharp edged tool the polished cutting at the sides of the band is performed. Then on another lathe it is placed in a hollow block and the inside burnished. All the oil and dirt are then removed, and the thimble is polished and made ready for the market.

Forecasting a Husband.

In Greece a young woman who wishes to know what sort of husband she is going to have goes to one of the gypsy fortune tellers, who are regarded with much reverence. The fortune teller gives her a pie seasoned with aromatic herbs. This she eats just before going to bed, having hung around her neck a bag with three flowers, one white, one red and one yellow. The next morning she draws one of the flowers out of the bag. If it be white, she is to marry a young man; if red, one of middle age; if yellow, a widower. She relates what she has dreamed in the night to the fortune teller, who predicts whether her husband is to be rich and the marriage happy. If the predictions are not carried out to the letter, no fault is ascribed to the fortune teller. This deviation by the bag and different colored flowers is equally adaptable to all countries and has the merit of being a cheap and easy way of settling one's future, if one has only faith enough.

Bagged the Bandits.

When Maximilian was emperor of Mexico the country was overrun with train robbers. They marched about in large bands, tore up the tracks and robbed everybody. One day the train from Vera Cruz to the City of Mexico was bounding gayly along, the five coaches filled with hidalgos, peons, market women and farmers. Suddenly it came to a standstill. The train guard cried out, "Bandits!" Sure enough, on either side of the road the ragged but desperate ruffians were lined up. Suddenly hidalgos, peons, market women and farmers arose. There were a blinding flash and a deafening volley from both sides of the car, and 100 of the bandits fell dead, while the 300 zouaves, disguised in the costumes of the country, turned out of the cars, pursued the flying robbers and killed every one.

A Memory Method.

Association is the vital spring of memory, and any one who analyzes his thought process may catch himself recalling a thing by a series of allied things. Many people have tried to systematize association and arrange a scientific memory method.

A mathematician has discovered a most interesting process for remembering dates. Suppose you have forgotten the year of the Norman conquest. Take the date of your birth and add to it the number of the month when you were born. Multiply the result by the

day of the month your father was born. Square the result. Add six. Now divide by the cube root of the number of people in the United States, forget the result, add 1,008 and you have the required date.

How to Read.

Reading is not a lost art to the same degree that conversation is, but it has in most cases an arrested development through so much reading that makes no demand upon aesthetic sensibility, so that one is apt to bring to a fine story full of delicate shades of thought and feeling the same mind which he yields to a newspaper, putting a blunt interrogation as to its meaning as conveyed in the terms of a rational proposition, and the writer's charm is wholly lost upon him. While the reader's surrender to the author must be complete, his attitude should not be passive, but that of active responsiveness and partnership.—H. M. Alden in Harper's Magazine.

First Love.

It is a popular fallacy that the first love is the true one, unique in its excellence, says an exchange. As well say that the first picture of a painter is the best of all he will paint in the course of his life; that the first speech, the first book, the first statue, the first composition, will be the best of the statesman, novelist, sculptor or musician, as the case may be. First works have all the imperfections of uncertainty, of inexperience and ignorance. And it is rather by chance than by anything inherent in the nature of Cupid's ways that the first love turns out to be the great one.

Girls in Guatemala.

None of the maidens in Guatemala are allowed to go abroad from their homes without the company of a chaperon, and a lover is only allowed to come and court his sweetheart through the heavily barred windows of her father's home. After they are married they pass along the streets in Indian file, the women marching ahead, so that the husband can be in a position to prevent any flirtations.

Perfectly Correct.

The deacon was hard to convince. "No," declared he, "I'll have no such contraption in my house. Pianos are things of evil."

"Oh, but, pa," protested his lovely daughter, "this is an upright piano!"—Pittsburg Post.

There Are Some Funny Ones.

"Tell me," said the editor's friend, "who are the most humorous writers you have ever met?" "Most of those who think they are serious writers," replied the editor.—Philadelphia Ledger.

The flattery of one's friends is required as a dram to keep up one's spirits against the injustice of one's enemies.—Bulwer

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